

tests back? What about helping State and local governments, who have to lay off firefighters and busdrivers? What about dealing with people who might be evicted? What about dealing with people who can't feed their kids? The list of issues goes on and on and on, and they are all immediate and urgent.

So to have this bill, which is inadequate on employment benefits alone—cuts them to the bone—and not include any of the other issues, in a hope to escape and then do nothing more? Forget it. It will not pass the Senate. It will not pass the House. It is a stunt.

Even if the White House would agree to another extension of enhanced unemployment at its current level, which many, if not most, Senate Republicans will refuse to support, there are just too many things left out—opening up our schools safely, healthcare testing and reducing the wait to get test results, State and local governments, so much more.

And even if the White House finally comes around to the position that we should extend the moratorium on evictions, that wouldn't be enough. It makes no sense to extend the moratorium on evictions without helping Americans actually afford the rent. We can prevent landlords or banks from kicking Americans out of their homes for another few months, but then what? The same Americans would be 6 months behind on the rent and have no hope of making up the difference.

So let's look. Here is where we are. Americans are worried as this awful pandemic rages on. The lifelines we passed here in Congress to protect families, small businesses, renters, school kids, and so many more are expired, and our Republican colleagues dither. We have a comprehensive, bold proposal. They have virtually nothing.

Let's remember recent history. That may give us some hope that we can get something done. Back in March and April, Republicans were late to the game, just as they are now, and proposed stingy, insufficient legislation in response to COVID-19, just like they are doing now. Each time, Democrats were not bullied by Republicans into passing something that wouldn't work and be insufficient, but we demanded that our colleagues sit down with us and negotiate a bill that meets the needs of the American people—and that is what we did.

In the second, third, and fourth phases of COVID relief, our negotiations produced much better legislation—legislation that passed both Houses with near unanimity. It is never easy, and it is never painless, but it can be done. We just need our Republican colleagues to get their act together, roll up their sleeves, understand the gravity and breadth and depth of this problem and negotiate with us in a serious way.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING JOHN LEWIS

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today our colleague John Lewis will be laid to rest. What an incredible legacy he leaves behind.

I was blessed to serve with him in the House of Representatives. The two of us were elected in the same class to start serving in the House of Representatives in 1987. We became friends, and he was certainly an inspiration to all of us.

I particularly mention his name today because of the challenges we are finding to our First Amendment right to peacefully protest. John Lewis frequently talked about "good trouble" and that all of us have a responsibility to speak out when we see something that is wrong and to do it in a peaceful way.

It is interesting that his last public appearance was with the protesters of Black Lives Matter here in DC, as he wanted to be there and was proud to see the diversity of the group who was there to protest the brutalities that we have seen in America and the systemic racism we see in our country.

We not only have the right but the responsibility to speak out when we see these injustices. The First Amendment to our Nation's Constitution is key to the foundation of our country's democracy, including the right of people to peacefully assemble and petition for redress of grievances.

The President of the United States ordering unidentified agents of the Department of Homeland Security to arrest and detain protesters is a flagrant breach of trust and potentially a violation of the law. Congress must speak up in a unified, bipartisan voice and tell the President that such an escalation and militarization of our city streets without provocation or invitation from local officials must stop and must stop now.

I am gravely concerned that when Federal law enforcement agents are deployed in this manner, their presence has increased tensions and caused more confrontation between demonstrators and police. Indeed, local, State, and even Federal officials—including the U.S. Attorney—have criticized the Federal agents' intervention and tactics in Portland.

I share the concerns of many of my colleagues regarding the misuse of resources and personnel, particularly when Federal law enforcement officers are used for political purposes by the President to violate the civil rights of our constituents. We all should be concerned that both the Justice and Homeland Security Departments are misusing their emergency authorities and are actually aggravating the situation in Portland and elsewhere.

I have cosponsored legislation that would place important limits and oversight on the use of Federal officers for enforcement operations and arrests relating to protests, including making sure that law enforcement officers are clearly identified.

I recently voted in the Senate to place further limits on the transfer of excess military equipment to State and local law enforcement agencies, and I will continue to demand that America reform its Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

After the shocking death of George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis, Congress must address systemic racism and police brutality through passage of the Justice in Policing Act. While this legislation has passed the House, Senator MCCONNELL has still refused to bring it up in the Senate, condemning it to his legislative graveyard.

Now more than ever, we urgently need to rebuild trust with our communities and change the Trump administration's mentality from a warrior to a guardian approach for law enforcement.

News reports indicate that Federal law enforcement officers have been using unmarked vehicles to drive around downtown Portland and detain protesters since at least mid-July. In some cases, citizens could not tell the difference between law enforcement and far-right extremists in the region who wore similar military gear.

This reminds us of the most radical images that we have seen in authoritative, repressive regimes on how they violate the rights of their citizens.

Federal officials have been reported as grabbing Americans in the dark, not providing any form of identification, and arresting, searching, and detaining individuals in cells before properly reading their Miranda rights. There are widespread reports of Federal agents not having any probable cause before making these arrests.

Not only are these actions irresponsible and dangerous, it is a violation of our constitutional rights. America's strength is in the ideals that we believe in. We are the global leader in democratic values and the rule of law. These actions weaken our Nation, and these actions weaken America's credibility and global leadership on behalf of democratic values.

I am pleased that last week the inspectors general of the Department of Homeland Security and Justice agreed to investigate how their agents used force, detained people, and conducted themselves in confrontations with protesters both in Portland, OR, and Washington, DC.

Recall in Washington, DC, that Attorney General Barr used force to clear a peaceful protest at Lafayette Park just outside the White House. Attorney General Barr took this action so that the President could hold up a Bible for a photo-op outside of a church. This was an unacceptable breach of faith in the Constitution. It breaks the trust

between our law enforcement and our citizens.

Defending democracy and the rule of law—the very freedoms we as a nation hold so dear—is hard work. It is made harder when the very individuals sworn to uphold the law work so hard to undermine it.

The Justice Department is the only Cabinet agency named after an ideal, and Mr. BARR has forfeited his ability to effectively lead it.

In particular, the Justice Department inspector general will investigate how U.S. marshals have used force in Portland and how other parts of the Justice Department—such as the FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives—were used in the Nation's Capital.

The inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security has said he opened an investigation into allegations that Customs and Border Protection agents improperly detained and transported protesters in Portland and that he would review the deployment of DHS's personnel in recent weeks.

America is not under siege, as the President would like citizens to believe—except by a President who freely uses aggressive law enforcement as a prop to distract the country from his flailing response to the pandemic that has crippled our Nation. Citizens are rightly concerned that the administration has deployed a secret police force, not to investigate crimes but to intimidate individuals it views as political adversaries.

Several former Secretaries of Homeland Security have sounded the alarm as well. Michael Chertoff, a Secretary of Homeland Security under George W. Bush, wrote recently:

The Trump administration's deliberate decision to intervene in the Portland protests with a heavy hand, unconventional means and inflammatory political rhetoric has contributed to growing public distrust—particularly of the Department of Homeland Security.

Critics of the department are now rightly worried that its law enforcement agents might be increasingly deployed by President Trump to score political points, or even interfere with the November election.

Secretary Chertoff concluded:

These actions, now or into the future, endanger our democracy and undermine the nation's safety—by hurting the department's ability to carry out its core mission of protecting Americans from genuine threats to our security.

Tom Ridge, the first Secretary of Homeland Security after its creation, said that the presence of Federal authorities in Portland, OR, as protests continue in the city, is not consistent with the Department of Homeland Security's mission. He noted that the first words of the Department's vision statement that he helped establish are “preserving our freedoms.”

Secretary Ridge continued:

When they appear to be quasi-military rather than law enforcement, I think it's like pouring a little bit of gasoline on the

fire. . . . Preserving the right to dissent is something very important.

Now, I know President Trump has threatened to send additional Federal officers to Baltimore and other cities to quell any further dissent or protests. Let me remind President Trump that the protests in Baltimore after the death of George Floyd in police custody have been peaceful, so we don't need additional Federal agents designed to crack down on free speech and peaceful protests, nor do we want Federal agents to come to Baltimore with the purpose of escalating tensions with the community or trying to provoke or incite violence or to discourage the lawful right of citizens exercising their First Amendment.

Instead, in Baltimore, we want to continue working cooperatively with our Federal partners, like our U.S. attorney, to address the stubborn problems involving drug gangs and the high violent crime and murder rate. Ensuring the safety of our communities requires an all-hands-on-deck approach. In Baltimore, we are using a task force known as the Baltimore Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Strike Force, which is made up of local, State, and Federal partners. This task force only works due to continued transparency, collaboration, and engagement with the community throughout this process.

Together, the citizens of Baltimore will keep working with our law enforcement authorities to improve safety in our neighborhoods and on our streets. The city of Baltimore and the U.S. Department of Justice are continuing to work closely together, along with our U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland, to fully implement a consent decree to bring constitutional policing to Baltimore residents so that the police adopt a guardian instead of a warrior approach.

Instead of spreading divisive rhetoric and taking escalatory actions against our citizens—tactics recently employed by President Trump—we should focus on working constructively at the Federal, State, and local level to promote proven strategies and solutions—like the strike force—that effectively reduce crime and improve safety.

I look forward to the findings and recommendations of the inspectors general of those two Departments to make clear what went wrong and to take steps to make sure this type of Federal law enforcement authority is never abused again in the future.

I would hope that all my colleagues would recognize the threat of these actions to the protections in the First Amendment of our Constitution, and we will work together as one body to protect the lawful rights of our citizens to protest their disagreements with government in a peaceful way.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TROOP WITHDRAWAL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I am vice chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. It is an awesome responsibility and assignment. We end up dealing with over 50 percent of the discretionary domestic spending each year in the United States. I work with my chairman, Senator SHELBY, and I have worked with others in the past trying to keep up with a changing environment in the world and a changing agenda in Washington. Many of the briefings I receive are open and public, and many are also classified.

Last week, I met with the top U.S. commander in Europe, General Tod Wolters. General Wolters provided for me and Senator SHELBY a classified briefing on the Trump administration's plans to remove almost 12,000 American troops from Germany. Yesterday, the Secretary of Defense, Mark Esper, made a similar briefing but publicly to the press.

I am extremely concerned by both the classified and unclassified information I have been given about this plan and by the differences in the briefing I received compared to the public announcements from the Secretary of Defense yesterday. Let me start off by saying that this plan makes no sense. While some are framing this as an improvement of our military posture in Europe, I don't buy it. Nobody else should either.

Germany now spends 1.3 percent of its gross domestic product on defense. Along with a majority of NATO members, Germany has agreed to reach a goal of 2 percent of GDP on defense. Germany ought to make good on its word; that is for sure. But to be clear, many, including President Trump, fail to appreciate that there is much more to NATO's importance than simply meeting a spending goal. In fact, there are many important ways to evaluate this historic NATO alliance and judge the commitment of each member, including the political will of its leaders, its shared vision and values, and the interoperability of our military through regular training. All of these things add to NATO's deterrence. But President Trump is clearly just using this argument about the percentage contribution and insufficient spending to drive a petty and personal grudge against Germany.

How do we know this? Because—listen to this—the countries that would be receiving our troops transferred out of Germany also do not meet the 2 percent goal.

President Trump was reportedly angry that German Chancellor Merkel declined an invitation for an in-person G7 summit in the United States in the middle of this global pandemic. Think